

Bering Sea, Alaska Snow Crab

Date of Declaration/Determination: May 11, 2000 (continuations of this initial disaster were determined November 29, 2001 and November 13, 2002; no additional appropriations pursuant to continuations. Another continuation was determined on February 10, 2005, for 2003 and 2004, with no appropriation to date.)

Location: Eastern Bering Sea off Alaska

Cause: Significant declines in biomass of snow crabs due to unknown but probably natural causes--low recruitment levels possibly triggered by events in the physical environment, such as the regime shift and warm Bering Sea temperatures in 1997-98.

Authority: Sec 312(a) of MSA

Appropriation: FY 2000 Emergency Supplemental, June 29, 2000--\$10 million

-Communities relieved of cost share requirement in FY 2001 appropriations language

Assistance Provided: The Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development was awarded a grant of \$7 million plus the required match of \$2.33 million. Activities include community grants to diversify the economy, assess socioeconomic impacts of the commercial failure, or assist fishermen(\$8.6 million); an individual loan program (\$200K); support for the Coordinated Response Partnership project, including meetings, workshops, and research, planning, and technical assistance (50K); and \$466.7K for program support (5% of the total award).

The remaining \$3 million was awarded for Bering Sea ecosystem research, of which \$1 million is for Alaska to develop a cooperative research plan to restore the fishery.